ALSACIENNE

BY

FRANCIS THOMÉ

Revised and Edited with Instructions as to Interpretation
and Method of Study, Biographical Sketch,
Story and Glossary
by

EMERSON WHITHORNE

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For the Piano Grade 2-a

ALSACIENNE

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—FRANCIS THOMÉ.

FRANCIS THOME was born, October 18, 1850, at Port Louis, on the Island of Mauritius, in the Indian Ocean. Entering the Paris Conservatoire in 1860, he was a pupil there until 1870. His life was devoted to the teaching of music, musical criticism and composition. He set to music numerous pieces for the theatre. His opera of *Romeo and Juliet,* and his symphonic ode, *Hymn to the Night,* were the most important of his larger works. He is more generally known, however, by his charming and refined pianoforte compositions. His life was apparently uneventful, as little information is obtainable regarding it. He died in Paris, November 16, 1909.

THE STORY: This piece is a slow waltz such as the peasants dance in Alsace-Lorraine. The province of Alsace-Lorraine has belonged to Germany since 1870. At that time the French people were obliged to give this territory to Germany, as the Germans were victorious in the Franco-Prussian war.

Let us imagine ourselves at a mountain inn. We have climbed many hours and are now weary and in need of refreshment. A charming Alsatian maiden, clad in picturesque costume, serves us. And after having dined most heartily we stroll out upon the wide veranda to behold the crimson sun setting below the distant mountain peaks. From within we hear music and the sound of dancing feet. We turn and there in the large dining-room dances our Alsatian maid. She and her partner are dancing to the music of the waltz called *Alsacienne.*

METHOD OF STUDY: Key of D major. Three-eight measure.
This waltz should be played in a smooth, flowing manner, with an even moderate *tempo.* The left-hand part is to be given prominence, it having been marked with dynamic signs different from the treble. Notice in m. 1, the *mf* in the bass and the *p* in the treble, also in m. 9, the *p* in the bass and *pp* in the treble. This plan is followed except in the last section, beginning with m. 65.

The notes and phrasing of the measure groups 1—8, 9—16 and 49—56, are exactly alike. Further comparison shows that the measure groups 17—24, 25—32 and 57—64 are similar in notes and phrasing. It is true that in all the instances quoted the expression marks vary, and this point the student must observe carefully, bringing out the contrasts as indicated.

The fingering of the left-hand part in measures 33, 34, 35 and 36 (also measures 41, 42, 43 and 44) may at first appear strange, but this fingering has been chosen in order to compel the student to separate the three-note groups from each other. Notice that the chord on the third beat of m. 3 drops the G occurring in the preceding chord, as this G appears in the bass; the composer did not wish to double the seventh of the dominant seventh chord, neither did he wish to write parallel octaves.

It is interesting to observe how frequently the last eighth-note of a measure is slurred to a group of notes which follow. (See measures 4-5-6, 6-7-8, etc.) The chords in the treble should be played evenly without any accents; they must be treated as accompaniment, always secondary to the melody.

The *crescendos* and *diminuendos* beginning with m. 18 follow the upward and downward line of the melody. This is very clear in measures 33-34-35-36, and again in measures 41-42-43-44. As the bass of measures 65—72 assumes the role of accompanying part, the top voice of the chords in the right-hand part should be brought out expressively to form a melody. The hold in the last measure should be prolonged to the time value of three additional measures, thus completing the four-measure rhythm.

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ALSACIENNE

GLOSSARY

NAMES

Thomé,	pronounced,	Tō-mā.
Mauritius,	"	Mō-rĭ-shŭs.
Alsacienne,	"	Äl-sä-sĭ-ĕn.

TERMS

tempo di valse,	pronounced,	tĕm-pō dē väl-sĕ, in waltz time.
espressivo,	"	ĕs-prĕs-sēe-vō, with expression.
dolce,	"	dōl-tshĕ, soft, sweet.
riten. (ritenuto),	"	rē-tĕ-noo-tō, detained, slower.
a tempo,	"	ä tĕm-pō, in time.
crescendo,	"	crĕ-shĕn-dō, increasing the tone.
diminuendo,	"	dē-mē-noo-ĕn-dō, diminishing the tone.
perdendosi,	"	pār-dĕn-dō-zē, decreasing in tone and tempo.

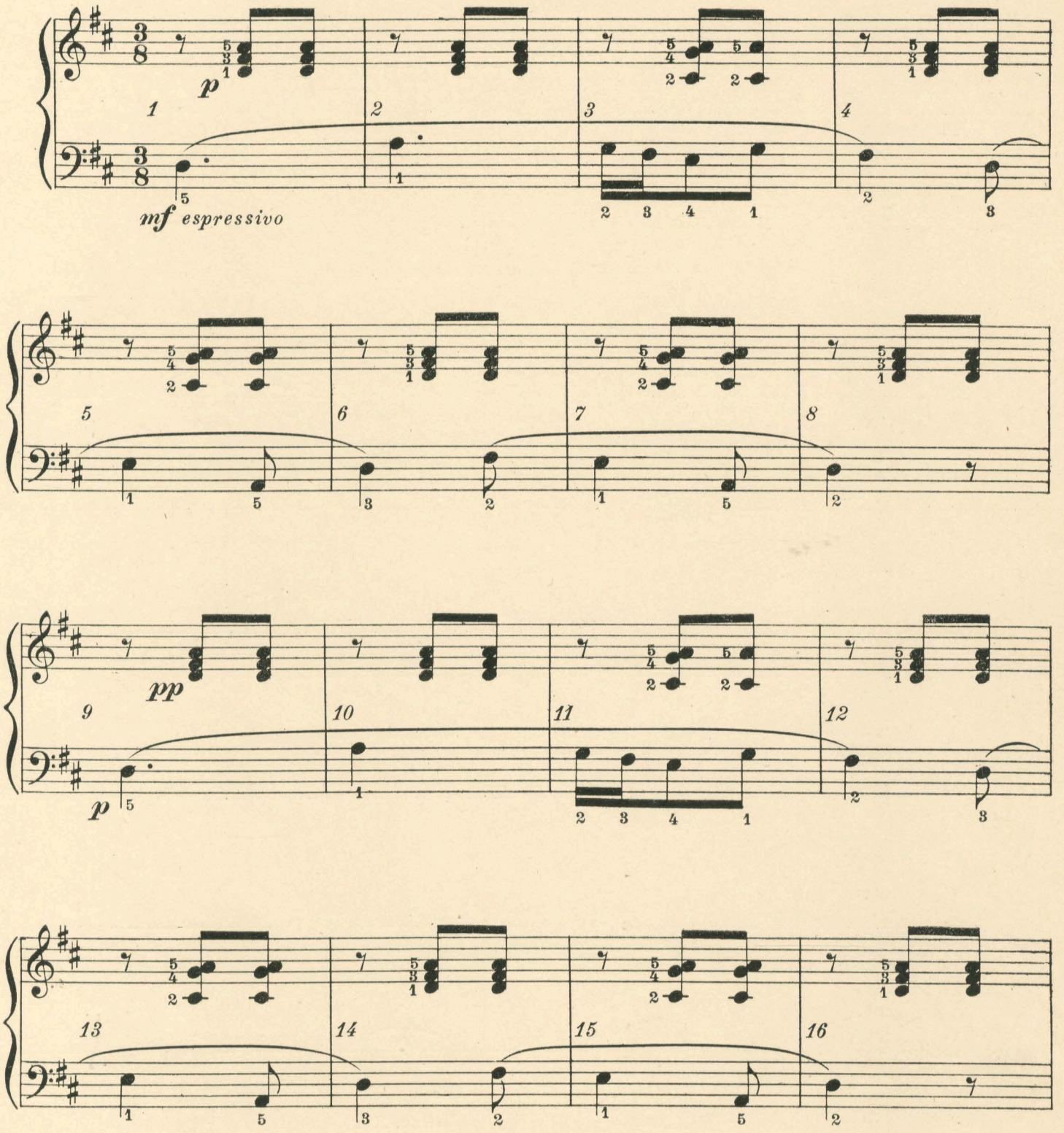
Grade 2-a

Alsacienne

Valse lente

Revised and edited by Emerson Whithorne

FRANCIS THOMÉ

Tempo di Valse ♩. = 54 - 58

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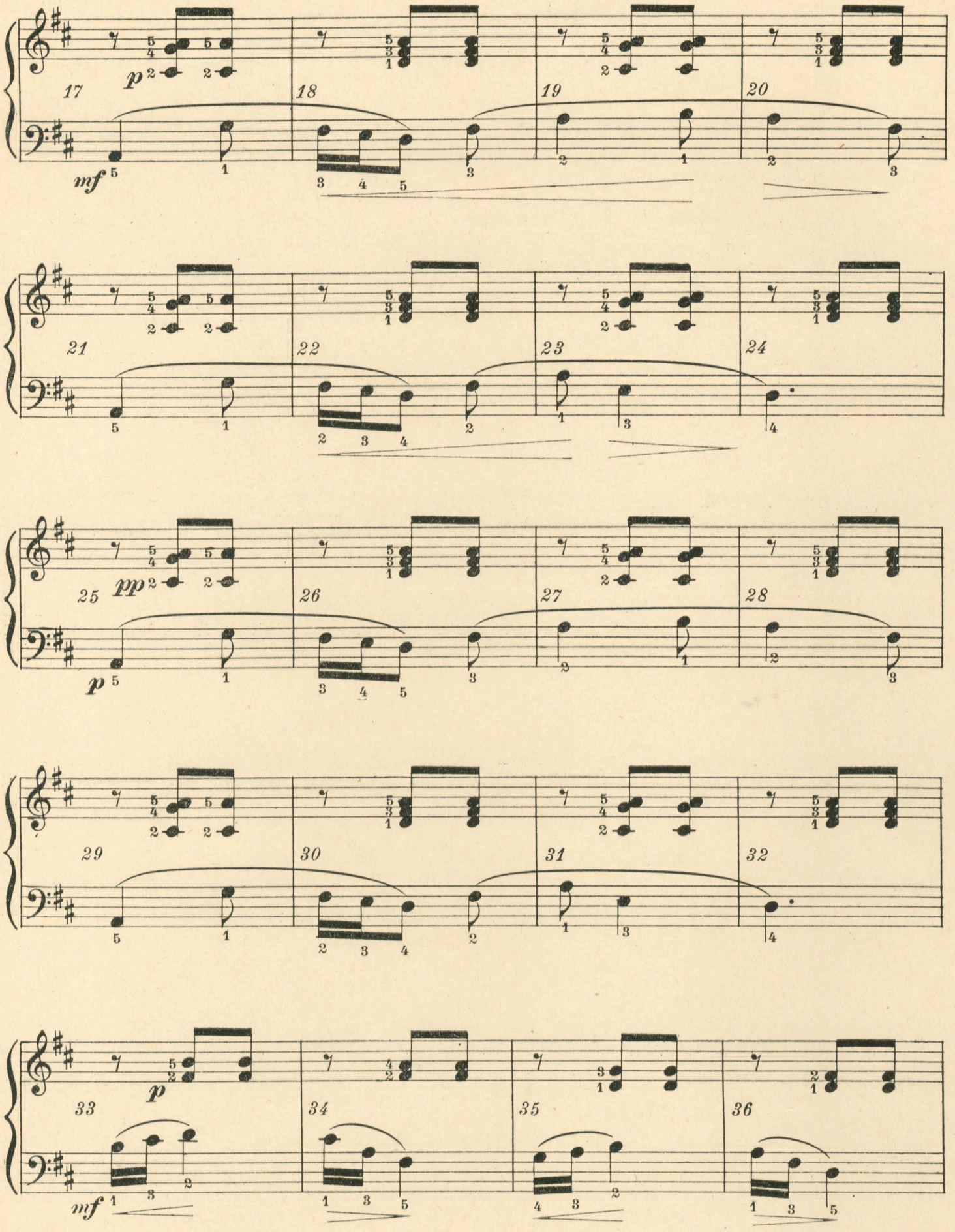
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
pp
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
p
mf

37 *dolce*

38

39

40

41 *p*

mf

42

43

44

45 *dolce*

46

47

48 *riten.*

a tempo

49 *p*

mp

50

51

52

53

54

55

56

57 *p* 58 59 60

mf

61 62 63 64

65 *mf* 66 67 *p* 68

69 70 *sempre diminuendo* 71 72

73 *pp* 74 *perdendosi* 75 *riten.* 76 77 *ppp*

RECITATION QUESTIONS

1. When and where was Francis Thomé born?
   Ans.

2. What is the story of this piece?
   Ans.

3. Explain how the dynamic signs give prominence to the melody.
   Ans.

4. Select the similar measure groups.
   Ans.

5. What is the object of the special fingering of the bass of measures 33-34-35-36?
   Ans.

6. Why is there no G in the last right-hand chord of m. 3?
   Ans.

7. Explain the harmony of the last section.
   Ans.

8. Define *perdendosi, riten., dolce.*
   Ans.

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